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## **PRESS RELEASE**

**August 10, 2009**

Madera County District Attorney Michael R. Keitz has announced the formation of a special prosecution team in the District Attorney's office to address county wide graffiti and related vandalism crimes.

"I am gravely concerned about the destruction of personal and public property in Madera County, as well as the cost to the taxpayers for graffiti abatement. Additionally I am concerned the economic prosperity of Madera County is threatened, when those entities that would consider re-location of their businesses here, instead choose other locations without the blight of graffiti and the perception of gang activity.

Those who choose to participate in graffiti and vandalism crimes will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law, and restitution will be sought for property damage. Additionally, where avenues in civil law are available to hold the parents of juveniles who commit such crimes financially responsible, I will cooperate fully with the process to support this result."

The District Attorney also thanks law enforcement agencies for their collaboration and assistance in targeting graffiti and vandalism crimes. "The apprehension of the individuals who commit these crimes is the first step in resolving the problem." Agencies contributing to a county-wide effort include: Madera County Sheriff's Department, Madera Police Department, Chowchilla Police Department, California Highway Patrol, Bureau of Narcotics Enforcement, Madera County Narcotics Enforcement Team and the Madera County Gang Enforcement Team.